

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Zack Thompson, Juli Hayes, Abigail Guzman, Barbara Brooks, Jon Elliott, Bob Norton  
STAFF PRESENT: Bryan Lackey, Angela Sheppard, Abb Hayes, Alisa Grayson

Mayor Thompson called the meeting to order and served as the presiding officer.

### **BUDGET PRESENTATIONS:**

#### **Economic Development Council (EDC)**

Gainesville-Hall County Economic Development Council Chairman William Bagwell thanked Council for their many years of partnership and expressed appreciation for the City's long-term vision over the decades. Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce (GHCC) President/CEO Tim Evans expressed appreciation for the Council and city staff and for their partnership. He noted the EDC also serves as the city's marketing sales agent on developments and commented on the new developments near this facility. Several GHCC staff members (Senior Project Manager Ryan Jackson, Existing Industry Manager Nikki Chandler, Director of Vision 2030 Anna Hester, Marketing Manager Felipe Darquea, and Financials & Accounting Manager Mark VanTassel) were in attendance and summarized activities associated with their areas of focus. GHCC Chairman and President of Lanier Technical College Tim McDonald expressed appreciation for the collaborative partnerships, core competency and visionary leadership of the city. He noted this year's request is for \$185,000. Mayor Thompson expressed appreciation to the Chamber and their staff for all they do and for their partnership.

NOTE: Council Member Brooks joined the meeting at 9:20 AM.

#### **FY2027 Parks & Recreation Budget**

Parks & Recreation Director Kate Mattison presented the budget report using a power point noting the budget was approved by the Parks & Recreation Board in March 2026. She shared the operating initiatives noting approximately 92% of the master plan's action items is complete. The revenue summary indicated a total revenue budget of \$12,598,846. She also reported and shared some stats on the operating budget, capital improvements, and revenues/expenditures. There was a brief discussion about the stairs/street at City Park and plans for addressing safety concerns. Council Member Hayes expressed appreciation for having a great staff and Board, for all their work with the parks, and the collaborative efforts with other organizations. City Manager Bryan Lackey commented on Parks & Recreation being an independent agency thus a different budget process. Mayor Thompson commented on having a great Parks & Recreation department and expressed appreciation for all they do. Council Member Brooks expressed excitement for the planned improvements at Holly Park and Desota Park.

### **DEPARTMENT ISSUES:**

**Resolution: Establishing Just Compensation for the CDBG Program and Authorizing Property Acquisition from Laquita H. Pethel**

**Resolution: Establishing Just Compensation for the CDBG Program and Authorizing Property Acquisition from New Town Florist Club, Inc.**

Neighborhood Development Manager Jessica Tullar presented the two items noting funding was received. She summarized the information noting the intent is to acquire the two properties using CDBG funds and then to transfer them to the Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency to help expand the city's parks and recreations. Council Member Bob Norton inquired about flood plains on property. Mayor Thompson expressed appreciation for Mrs. Tullar and all her work.

Both items placed on the April 21, 2026 Council Meeting Consent Agenda

**Public Hearing Item: Transmittal of the FY2025 Annual Update to the CIE**

Planning Manager Heather Deweese stated the resolution transmits the draft of the annual update noting it is related to the City's Impact Fees program and serves as an annual audit of the program per DCA requirements. Upon approval and transmission to the state, staff will return in June to address any comments and to present the final draft.

Public hearing item advertised for the April 21, 2026 Council Meeting Agenda

**Public Hearing Item: Request from G2 Industrial Partners, LLC to rezone a 1.1± acres tract located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Athens Street and Purina Drive (a/k/a 920 Purina Drive, SE; 937, 943 and 949 Athens Street, SE) from General Business (G-B), Light Industrial (L-I) and Heavy Industrial (H-I) to Light Industrial (L-I). Ward Number: Three. Tax Parcel Number(s): 00-058-002-005 and 006; 01-058-002-005A. Request: Existing light industrial uses.**

City Attorney Abb Hayes summarized the application and asked that questions be referred to the Community and Economic Development department staff.

Public hearing item advertised for the April 21, 2026 Council Meeting Agenda

**CITY MANAGER ISSUES:**

City Manager Bryan Lackey stated he was excited about today's facility tour and provided some direction.

**MAYOR/COUNCIL ISSUES:**

**Council Member Hayes**

1. Reported she will present a district report at the GMA District 2 Spring Listening Session tomorrow.
2. Provided a Parks & Recreation ex-officio report.

**Council Member Guzman**

1. Provided a Housing Authority ex-officio report.
2. Reported the Gainesville Housing Authority has been recognized by HUD (Housing & Urban Development) as an industry leader and asked to lead a national peer discussion group on the redevelopment and expansion of housing in innovative ways.

**Council Member Brooks**

Commented on the importance of department information being shared at Council Meetings.

**Council Member Norton**

Commented on the scale and scope of all that is going on in Gainesville noting he was looking forward to learning more.

**Mayor Thompson**

Presented the following nominations for appointments:

1. Appoint Sam Hulsey to serve on the Chattahoochee Golf Course Advisory Committee.
2. Reappoint Emily "Sissy" Lawson to the Chicopee Woods Area Park Commission.

3. Appoint Aimee Hoecker to the Main Street Advisory Board.

Appointments placed on the April 21, 2026 Council Meeting Consent Agenda

**CITY ATTORNEY ISSUES:**

**Resolution: Abandonment of City of Gainesville Owned Property on Harvey Street**

City Attorney Abb Hayes referenced a map and presented the proposed resolution to authorize removal/abandonment of a piece of property from the municipal street system and incorporate into the city's Parks & Recreation system. Upon inquiry, he confirmed the total size.

Placed on the April 21, 2026 Council Meeting Consent Agenda

**Resolution: Ratification and Approval of the Housing Authority Multifamily Note (Governmental) (Lakeside at Harrison Village)**

City Attorney Abb Hayes presented the proposed resolution noting this is required by the IRS for issuance of bonds. It authorizes the Mayor to execute the approval and for the Housing Authority to proceed.

Placed on the April 21, 2026 Council Meeting Consent Agenda

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

City Attorney Abb Hayes requested an Executive Session to discuss legal and real estate matters.

**Motion to close the meeting to enter an Executive Session to discuss legal and real estate matters at 10:04 AM.**

Motion made by Council Member Hayes

Motion seconded by Council Member Guzman

**Votes favoring the motion: Hayes, Guzman, Brooks, Elliott, Norton**

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STAFF PRESENT: Bryan Lackey, Abb Hayes, Angela Sheppard, Rusty Ligon, Alisa Grayson

**Motion to close the Executive Session at 11:38 AM.**

Motion made by Council Member Elliott

Motion seconded by Council Member Hayes

**Votes favoring the motion: Hayes, Guzman, Brooks, Elliott, Norton**

**RECESS: 11:38 AM**

**RECONVENE: 12:08 PM**

**COUNCIL TOUR: (Public Safety Training Complex, 1645 Fullenwider Road)**

Police Chief Jay Parrish and Fire Chief Brandon Ellis conducted a tour of the facility.

## PRESENTATIONS:

### Chattahoochee Golf Course

Director of Golf Rodger Hogan presented information using a power point presentation. He shared the departments accomplishments, challenges/opportunities, and initiatives which referenced the following:

- Accomplishments:
  - Yamatrack GPS
  - Range netting completed
  
- Challenges/Opportunities:
  - Bill Bergin golf course design
  - Increased footage of the practice putting green
  - Conversion of lower putting green to a short game area
  - Installation of new irrigation system
  - Water feature additions
  - Bunker renovations
  - Other renovation items
  
- Initiatives:
  - Improvements to other areas (i.e., tee topdressing, #17 chipping area, repurposed greens mix)
  - Debris clearing and removal
  - Aeration
  - Golf shop improvements

### Council Questions:

- *There was an inquiry about the pace of play.*
- *There was an inquiry about the holes in the range netting.*
- *There was an inquiry regarding the need to address the maintenance facility.*
- *There was an inquiry regarding the debris fill area and plans to address it.*
- *There was an inquiry about the plans for improvements at the 2<sup>nd</sup> landing area at 14 where it is hard to grow grass.*

### Fire Department

Fire Chief Brandon Ellis presented information using a power point. He shared the departments accomplishments, challenges, opportunities and initiatives which referenced the following:

- Accomplishments:
  - New fire boat
  - New heavy rescue
  - Public Safety Training Center
  - Station #5
  - Fire engine for Station #5 delivered
  
- Challenges/Opportunities:
  - Federal mandates
  - State regulations
  - Federal funding reduction from grants

- Medical community service demand outweighing funding contributions
- Public education on true emergencies
- Local ordinances for 911 abuse
- Medical community fee schedule
- Partnerships for the future Qwake program

Chief Ellis provided details about the Quake Pioneer Program and shared a video of the system in action.

***Council Questions/Comments:***

- *There was an inquiry about the size and capabilities of the Fire Boat.*
- *There was an inquiry about the requirements of automatic aid.*
- *It was commented the new Fire Station 5 is needed especially due to growth.*
- *There was an inquiry about if there is a market for out-of-commission equipment.*
- *There was an inquiry about availability of a simulator for the Quake system.*

**Police Department**

Police Chief Jay Parrish presented the information using a power point presentation. He shared the departments accomplishments, challenges, opportunities and initiatives which were referenced as follows:

- Accomplishments:
  - Accreditation review
  - Statistical information related to calls, sponsored events, motor vehicle accidents and crime
  - AXON integration of equipment
- Challenges/Opportunities:
  - Recruitment and retention
  - Workforce development
  - Internet crimes
- Initiatives:
  - Downtown Precinct improvements
  - Gainesville Police Real-Time Crime Center
  - Asset location mapping system

Following the presentation, Chief Parrish introduced his team of Police Officers who were in attendance.

***Council Questions/Comments:***

- *There was an inquiry about salary rates/ranges.*
- *There was an inquiry regarding staffing shortage.*
- *There was an inquiry regarding police contact for referrals.*
- *There was an inquiry as to what Council could do to continue to provide support.*

There was a brief discussion surrounding the tax credit and how it has made an impact. Chief Financial Officer Jeremy Perry commented on other cities inquiring about Gainesville's funding structure and the benefits.

**ADJOURNMENT:** 1:24 PM

/ag

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Zack Thompson, Mayor

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Alisa Grayson, City Clerk